

NSC BRIEFING

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I. Government stability in Iran depends on an absolute monarch who lacks popular support. We are worried that militant nationalism of Arab World might encourage similar movements in Iran

A. Senior military leaders would with few exceptions probably remain loyal to the Shah in the event of an attempted coup, but the loyalty of the junior officers is in doubt. Many junior officers are dissatisfied with the lack of opportunities for advancement.

1. The Shah has begun an investigation to locate potential plotters in the Army.
2. Possible conspirators may have learned to cover themselves better from the failure of General Valiollah Gharami, former G-2, who was arrested last March for conspiracy against the Shah.
3. The Shah may be considering the eventual removal of all combat type units from Tehran leaving only the reinforced imperial guard on the theory that without combat troops a coup is less likely.

B. Discontented educated urban groups and the semi-literate urban lower classes are dissatisfied with the government's graft, inefficiency, and repression and associate the Shah with these abuses, although he desires rapid reforms.

C. Shah, however, is slow to make reforms because of his fear of losing support of conservative wealthy class and refuses to conciliate nationalist groups. Thus a change of regime, possibly through violence, almost inevitable.

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D. The Communist Tudeh party, outlawed since 1949, is still active especially in Abadan and in Tehran, despite the best efforts of the Iranian security forces. Current Tudeh strength has been estimated at 7,000, but this figure is questionable.

II. The UAR and the USSR are putting increasing pressure on Iran, particularly through subversive radio broadcasts.

A. UAR radio propaganda efforts are directed at arousing Kurdish nationalism among the 500,000 Kurdish tribesmen in northwestern Iran.

1. There are many rumors regarding Arab and Soviet sponsored agents being sent among the Kurds to plot against the Shah.

B. USSR through a clandestine broadcasting station in Leipzig is calling for the overthrow of the Shah.

C. The Iranian Government is taking measures to reduce the possible effects of this propaganda among the Kurds, but we do not know how successful these measures are.

III. The Shah continues to show signs of fear ^{especially since Iraqi coup,} for his personal safety and has requested American help in keeping him informed of opposition plans.

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